



# ***Milwaukee County Board***

## **Supervisor Deanna Alexander, 18<sup>th</sup> District**

For Immediate Release – July 15, 2015  
Bill Zaferos, Public Information Manager  
414/278-4230 Williamzaferos@milwaukeecountywi.gov

### **Many County Employees to Remain Underpaid** *Board ignores HR recommendations*

MILWAUKEE—The same day that the Milwaukee County Board received its first formal reports on new problems with an under-funded pension system, the Board approved using surplus funds for a 1.5% pay increase for non-elected, non-represented county employees.

Milwaukee County's Department of Human Resources has been studying employee compensation and long ago recommended to the County Board that old, obsolete pay ranges be eliminated and updated pay scales be adopted and put into effect. The Board has failed to give HR the go-ahead with the bulk of new pay ranges, yet issued its own raise decrees.

"Some argued that in order to operate like a business, the County needs strive to pay its employees fairly when times are good. While there is some truth to that, it also holds that successful billion-dollar corporations do not have oversight boards micromanaging hundreds of employee pay scales," said Supervisor Alexander.

The proposals from Human Resources were based on job duties and competitive market rates, moving the starting pay range for Highway Maintenance Workers up by \$4.38 an hour, and moving the starting pay range for Corrections Officers up by \$1.00 per hour, for example.

However, the proposal that originated with the County Board only offered the same Highway Maintenance Workers a \$0.22/hr. increase from \$14.60 to \$14.82, and offered Corrections Officers an increase of only \$0.25/hr. from \$17.17 to \$17.42. That proposal was entirely based on guaranteeing everyone an equal outcome rather than assessing the actual job being performed.

Another key difference is that the board's adopted proposal completely ignores the County employees that are overpaid, or middle managers paid the same or less than the employees they supervise.

"Good organizations compensate their employees fairly for their knowledge, skills, experience, and the work they perform. But they also budget appropriately for the changes, listen to their Human Resource experts, and resist allowing board-level policy makers to micromanage every level of management," Alexander said. "It's very unfortunate that our workers aren't paid appropriately and the Board instead throws pennies at workers while claiming benevolence."

The board approved the 1.5% raises on a 13-5 vote. (*No: Alexander, Borkowski, Schmitt, Staskunas, Taylor*)

###